



November/December 2002

SCHOOL FINANCE UPDATE

A Monthly Newsletter Published by the School Budgeting and Accounting Division

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Linda McCulloch, State Superintendent



Waterman Joins OPI School Finance Staff

OPI's School Budgeting and Accounting Division recently hired Mike Waterman as Fiscal Officer. Mike will be providing technical support to schools on budget amendments and elections. His other duties include audit monitoring and assistance on corrective actions. Mike will be helping OPI provide a broader range of finance training for clerks. Mike came to OPI from Littleton, Colorado, where he recently served as Bank Vice President. Since several family members were teachers, he's been interested in becoming involved in the education area. We look forward to introducing Mike to all of you at future workshops. Contact Mike Waterman at (406) 444-4524 or mwaterman@state.mt.us.

Maintenance Of Effort "Check-Up" This Month

In late November, OPI mailed notices to each district concerning the status of maintenance of effort (MOE) for Title I and other Title programs, IDEA Part B and Preschool, and possible special ed funding reversions. This process requires your immediate attention to correct any FY2001-02 Trustees' Financial Summary (TFS) reporting errors that might have caused MOE or reversion problems.

Need More Info About Maintenance of Effort (MOE)?

Look for Appendix C and D in the OPI Grants Handbook!

Look for the cover memo (included with this packet) showing the MOE/reversion notices you should expect in your packet. Deadline for corrections is December 20,

so prompt action is very important. For more info, contact Jim Oberembt at 444-1257 or joberembt@state.mt.us.

High School TR-1 Bus Route Forms Due in December

TR-1 Bus Route forms for the current year's routes were due to the County Superintendent by December 1. The county will ensure the forms are approved by the Transportation Committee and will submit them to OPI by December 15. For more info, call Maxine Mougeot at 444-3096 or mmougeot@state.mt.us.

Next Month--Flex Fund Payments

OPI will distribute the Flexibility Funds on January 24, 2003, with the Direct State Aid and State Special Education Funds. The payment amount will match the amount estimated on the district's FY 2002-03 Final Budget form for the Flexibility Fund (29). Use revenue code 3282 to record the deposit. Remember that the Flex Fund (29) is a budgeted fund; budget authority must have been established in the FY 2002-03 Final Budget in order to spend the money this year. For more info about the Flex Fund, see: <http://www.metnet.state.mt.us/schoolfinance/0000D9D9-80000007/00A5AAD7-006AD19D-00A5AAE1.0/FLEXIB~1.PDF>.



Need assistance? Contact Bonnie maze at (406) 444-3249 or bmaze@state.mt.us.

Questions or comments about this newsletter?
Contact Joan Anderson at (406) 444-1960 or janderson@state.mt.us.

MASBO New Clerks' Workshop Held

The Montana Association of School Business Officials (MASBO) held a 2-day training session for new (and almost new) clerks. The session, held in Helena on November 20 and 21 drew about 27 Clerks, County Superintendents, County Treasurers, and other staff. MASBO representatives, including President Betty Brumwell (Dutton K-12), Gwyn Andersen (Brown-ing), Kathy Preeshl (K-G) and Gracie Green (Roundup), were presenters. Discussions covered numerous basic and advanced topics -- payroll, elections, paying the bills, and reconciling the accounts, to name a few.

Another session is planned in April 2003. MASBO will announce registration later this winter.



2003 Elections Calendar— Ready!

The calendar for the May 6, 2003 trustee and general fund election has been updated (barring any unforeseen legislative changes) and is posted at the following website:

<http://www.opi.state.mt.us/pdf/schoolfinance/forms/electioncal03.pdf>

Need more information about elections? Contact Mike Waterman at (406) 444-4524 or mwaterman@state.mt.us.

State School Block Grants Distributed

OPI distributed 70% of the FY 2002-03 School Block Grants (HB124) to school districts in November. Payments were deposited in funds according to the FY 2002-03 Final Budgets. The remaining 30% will be distributed in May 2003. The revenue code for the deposits is 3444. School Block Grant money is not restricted to a particular purpose. Coops do not receive the School Block Grants.

Also in November, OPI distributed the County Transportation and County Retirement (HB124) Block Grants. Counties received 50% in this payment and will receive the remainder in May 2003. For more info, contact Bonnie Maze at (406) 444-3249 or bmaze@state.mt.us.



Happy Holidays!
from the OPI School Finance Staff

Back-L to R: Nancy Hall, Mike Waterman, Bonnie Maze, Denise Ulberg, Tal Redpath. Front: Joan Anderson, Nica Carte, Jim Oberembt, Lynnette Bunk

Impact Aid Workshop Held

OPI hosted an Impact Aid workshop in Helena on Thursday, December 12. Kerry Wingell of the U.S. Dept of Education, Impact Aid Program, was the guest speaker and covered an overview of the Impact Aid Program laws & regulations and information about completing the 2004 Impact Aid Application. For more information, contact Tal Redpath at (406) 444-3024 or tredpath@state.mt.us.

Entitlements for FY04

(NOTE: Entitlements for FY04 are the same as FY 2002-03 entitlements unless the law is changed by legislation.)

	Elem	High School
Basic	\$ 19,244	\$213,819
Per-ANB	\$ 3,906	\$ 5,205

Current Issues: GASB 34

1) OPI's GASB 34 Web Page: Please visit the School Finance Division's web page containing GASB 34 information:

<http://www.opi.state.mt.us/schoolfinance/gasb34.html>.

The site includes general information, recommendations for useful assets lives for depreciation, an Excel spreadsheet for determining "Major Funds", and examples of Management Discussion and Analysis (MD&A).

2) School Finance Division Organizes GASB 34 Workgroup: During December, OPI staff will meet with a group of clerks and auditors to discuss GASB 34 issues related to schools. Notes from the meetings will be posted on the School Finance GASB 34 web-site for any interested parties to follow. OPI will send an Official Email to notify districts when the notes are posted. The group will plan follow-up meetings as needed.

Are You Receiving OPI "Official Email"?

OPI now sends "Official Email" to districts and county superintendents rather than sending mass mailings. We email messages to unique METNET mailboxes for each school district and county.



There are several ways to view OPI Official Email:

- 1) Logon to METNET, either by dialing directly over a modem using the First Class Clint software or by entering through the OPI web page; **OR**
- 2) Set your METNET mailbox up to auto-forward the messages to one or more personal or school district Internet email accounts (i.e., the clerk and district superintendent could both receive a copy in their personal accounts); **OR**
- 3) If you prefer, you can view a complete list of OPI "Official Email" messages at http://www.metnet.state.mt.us/Official_Mail. Anyone with Internet access can read the messages. Set the address as a "favorite" on your Internet browser for fast, easy access.

Need help? Contact Nica Carte at (406) 444-4401 or ncarte@state.mt.us.

Bus Safety and Bus Driver Training Videos

Districts must provide a minimum of 10 hours of training for bus drivers each year. OPI has a variety of videos that districts can borrow for use in training drivers. Videos are listed at: <http://www.opi.state.mt.us/pdf/pupiltransport/DriverTrainingLib.pdf>.

Contact Maxine Mougeot at mmougeot@state.mt.us or (406) 444-3096 to request the videos.

Plan **2nd Semester Bus Inspections Now!**

Inspections must be passed by Jan. 31, 2003, to receive full funding for second semester.

School Directories Mailed

School Directories were recently mailed. The number of copies sent to each entity is as follows:

County Superintendents - 2 each
AA District Superintendents - 3 each
A District Superintendents - 2 each
Other Superintendents - 1 each
Principals - 1 each
School Clerks - 1 each

Additional copies of the Directory may be purchased for \$8.70 each and are available by contacting:
Advanced Litho Printing
226 9th Ave. S.
Great Falls, MT 59405-4034
(406) 453-0393

The Directory is also available on the OPI web site:
<http://www.opi.state.mt.us/Directory/>

Tuition Payment Due In December

Districts and counties that are responsible for tuition payments for attendance during FY 2001-02 must pay at least half the amount due by December 31 (MCA 20-5-324).

Contact Joan Anderson at (406) 444-1960 or janderson@state.mt.us if you need assistance.



**Season's
Greetings!**
*from Maxine ("Max")
Mougeot, Pupil Trans-
portation*



A-133 "Federal" Audit Reminder

A-133 audits for FY02 are to be completed and reported to the Department of Administration and the OPI by March 30. If you don't have your audit contract completed, please get it in soon. Remember: "Whenever bidding is required, the contract must be awarded to the lowest responsible bidder, except that all bids may be rejected." (20-9-205(5), MCA)

For more information about audits, contact Mike Waterman at (406) 444-4524 or mwaterman@state.mt.us.

School Finance Forms and Publications on Internet



Need an attendance agreement /tuition form? Transportation forms? Elections calendar? General information about school budgeting and accounting? See the School Finance area of the OPI website for forms and publications at

[http:// www.opi.state.mt.us/schoolfinance/forms.html](http://www.opi.state.mt.us/schoolfinance/forms.html)

Let us know if you are looking for a particular form, and we'll do our best to provide it electronically!

Fill-In Forms Provided by MASBO

Several fill-in forms (TR-1, TR-4, grant cash request forms) are available on the MASBO website at <http://www.masbo.com>. Special thanks to MASBO's Roger Heimbegner, who developed the forms!

School Accounting Manuals Available

New in the office and need an accounting manual? OPI has manuals in binders and we would be happy to provide you with a copy. Please contact Mike Waterman at (406) 444-4524 or mwaterman@state.mt.us. (Remember—the holidays are here—these make lovely gifts for family and friends!)

Q: Why are Santa's helpers so shy?

A: Low ELF-esteem.

In Case You Missed It.....

School Finance Calendar is Posted on the OPI website....



Click on this link:

<http://www.opi.state.mt.us/X-Cal.cx?db=OPI&v=2>

Contact: Nica Carte, 444-4401, or ncarte@state.mt.us.